

## ECONOMIC & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on 11 December 2018 commencing at 7.30 pm

Present: Cllr. Hogarth (Chairman)

Cllr. Maskell (Vice Chairman)

Cllrs. Abraham, Dr. Canet, Esler, Eyre, Lake, Maskell and McGregor

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs. Barnes, McGarvey and Pearsall

Cllr. Raikes was also present.

### 22. Minutes

Resolved: That the Minutes of the meeting held on 25 September 2018 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

### 23. Declarations of Interest

There were none.

### 24. Actions from Previous Meeting

The Chairman confirmed that an Excel spreadsheet that contained crime statistics for the District had been sent out by the Democratic Services team on 4 October 2018.

### 25. Update from Portfolio Holder

The Portfolio Holder, and Chairman, advised that as per the latest crime statistics, the Sevenoaks District now had the lowest number of recorded crimes in Kent.

He reported to Members that he had asked the Economic Development team to engage in creating a community rail partnership from Swanley to Bat & Ball through the Darenth Valley. He explained that with 2.8 million people on the border of the Sevenoaks District, the partnership would help add to the visitor economy.

The Portfolio Holder also advised Members that Sevenoaks District Council had successfully held their first Global Entrepreneurship Week at the Stag Theatre in November, with a good panel of discussions held with a good attendance, which he expected to be repeated next year.

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The Portfolio Holder informed Members that he had recently taken part in a walkabout with Sevenoaks MP Sir Michael Fallon visiting shops in the Town as part of Small Business Saturday.

Lastly, the Portfolio Holder advised Members that the second Floor Studios on the High Street was now 100% full and reported that there was now a waiting list for artists looking at using the studios. He also advised that as the agreement was a temporary one, the challenge was to find a new location with bigger capacity for between 60-80 artists, which would be comparative to London.

### 26. Referrals from Cabinet or the Audit Committee

There were none.

### 27. Visit by Lord Colgrain to speak on the Rural Economy DEFERRED

Due to current events in Parliament, the visit by Lord Colgrain was deferred and placed on the work plan to provisionally take place at the 5 March 2019 meeting.

## CHANGE IN ORDER OF AGENDA ITEMS

With the Committee's agreement, the Chairman brought forward the consideration of agenda item 8.

### 28. Community Plan Priorities 2019-2023

The Community Planning & Projects Officer presented a report that asked Members to consider the public consultation draft of the Community Plan Priorities for the period 2019-2023.

Members queried what help from other organisations is received to deliver the plan. The Chairman advised that all partners are active contributors, but all agencies have restrictions on what they could offer.

The Community Planning & Projects Officer also advised Members that the next phase was to promote the draft document, which included a simple form for respondents to fill out.

Members thanked the Community Planning & Projects Officer for his work on creating the Plan.

Resolved: That the report and Community Plan document be noted.

### 29. Economic Development Strategy 2018-21 Report

The Head of Economic Development & Property introduced a report on the final draft Economic Development Strategy 2018 -2021.

He explained that the plan aimed to be short and succinct, and was designed to be flexible and be able to attach individual actions to it in the future.

Members queried whether there was provision for helping older people back into work. The Chairman confirmed this was being worked on.

The Committee discussed the number of responses the consultation received and whether more needed to be done to engage more businesses. The Chairman explained that everything that could have been done to engage as many people as possible was and felt the strategy covered all bases in regards to economic development in the District.

Members of the Committee also discussed the need for faster broadband in the District and whether this would help keep businesses in the area. The Head of Economic Development & Property confirmed there had been a change of emphasis at a government level, which aimed to provide fibre broadband straight into premises. He explained that a parish-by-parish assessment was being carried out by Kent County Council on current broadband requirement provision. The assessments for the Sevenoaks District would be completed by the end of January 2019. Plans would then be prepared for improvements in those parts of the District with poor provision.

Resolved: That

- a) the report be noted and
- b) it be recommended to Cabinet that the Economic Development Strategy be approved.

30. Economic Development Strategy 2014-2017 Final Monitoring

The Head of Economic Development & Property presented a report, which summarised the performance of the targets in the 2014 -2017 Economic Development Strategy. The Economic Development Officer reported that 86% of the targets set were reported as green, with 7% as amber and 7% as red.

She advised Members that she believed 86% was a good outcome, and explained that most of the results that were amber and red were outside of the Council's control. She also advised that over 50 hours were spent supporting local businesses that helped move the strategy forward.

Members were also advised that due to leaving the European Union, funding avenues that were used in the previous strategy would have to be altered for the new strategy, with new funding streams also targeted.

Members thanked Officers for their work on the previous strategy and the incoming new strategy.

Resolved: That the report be noted.

31. Work Plan

The work plan was noted, with the presentation on the rural economy by Lord Colgrain provisionally deferred until the 5 March 2019 meeting, and the presentation by Visit Kent deferred until 18 June 2019.

THE MEETING WAS CONCLUDED AT 9.14 PM

CHAIRMAN